

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

Meeting minutes - July 10, 2002

Fairbanks Park Amphitheater

Vigo County, Terre Haute, IN

Members present

Cass County-Janet Fawley
DNR-Steve Morris
Fountain County-Ron Howard
Huntington County-Mike Mettler
Knox County-Tracy Newberry
Miami County-Ken Einselen
Parke County-John Isaacs
Vigo County-Keith Ruble
Wabash County-Ernie Passwater
Warren County-Louise Jewell

Proxies

Adams County-Norman Neiburger
Allen County-Norman Neiburger
Tippecanoe County-Steve Morris (verbal proxy)
Wells County-Ron James

Non-voting members present

IDEM-Matt Jarvis (alternate)

Members not present

Carroll County
Gibson County
Jay County
Posey County
Sullivan County
Vermillion County
INDOT
DNR Historic Preservation & Arch.
Dept. of Commerce - Tourism

Commission and DNR staff present

Susan Benner-WHRCC Exec. Director
Cynthia Webb-DNR

Guests

Carolyn Toops-Vigo Co. Parks Board
Maralee Britton-Terre Haute Park & Recreation Dept.
Pat Martin-W. Central IN Economic Development Dist.
Don Jewell-Warren County
Marion Jackson – Indiana State Univ.

THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT FOR A QUORUM.

CALL TO ORDER

Steve Morris called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. Steve introduced Ernie Passwater as the newly appointed commissioner for Wabash County. All attendees present introduced themselves.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MAY 1, 2002 MEETING MINUTES

Approval of the meeting minutes will be at next meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Lucky Neiburger was unable to attend the meeting. He is at the Wabash Riverfest being held at the Tapawingo Park. He is inviting everyone to attend and have a fun time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Susan Benner sought commission approval to have a display at the Riverfest. There is a \$10 booth fee. Susan also requested the commission sponsor her so she might gain membership into the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association.

Susan had the new tabletop exhibit display set up for the commission to view. She still needs to have the posters laminated. She has office supplies bought and now has a digital camera.

Susan is trying to update the website by placing a calendar of events on it.

A new organization, The Upper Wabash Basin Commission, has just started. Keith Huffman is president of this organization. Susan attended their meeting on June 11th, in Bluffton. Susan will be working with them on grant sources. Susan is also working on a grant for Tippecanoe Watershed Assistance through River Network.

Susan attended IDEM 319 Workshop, and an IPRA Trails and Wellness Workshop in Logansport. Susan also attended the Wabash River Initiative Buffer Meeting where Susan was asked by Wabash River landowners if the Commission would fund a project for stream bank erosion. In addition, Susan attended the Tippecanoe County SWCD Wabash River Workshop which she feels will be useful for the Teach the Wabash Symposium.

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris reported that at the end of the fiscal year the commission had a balance of \$2194.38 in operating funds that would likely revert back to the state general fund. The commission starts out the new fiscal year with \$75,000 in appropriated funds and \$47,433.50 in funds encumbered for the executive director's contract. Of the \$75,000 appropriated for the current year \$10,000 will be put in operating funds, \$59,750 will be for renewal of the executive director's contract, and 7% or \$5250 is placed in mandatory reserve.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Keith Ruble, Ron Howard and John Gettinger are the members of the Education Committee. There have been two meetings so far. The committee is putting emphasis on a symposium on Teach the Wabash. This will be September 18th in Vincennes. All commissioners will receive a copy of the invitation letter and will be listed as contacts in their respective counties. Ron Howard stated there is a real need for this; a high priority to educate our young people. .

BANKS OF THE WABASH REPORT

No report

OLD BUSINESS

Corridor management plan committee

Susan Benner handed out report about the public meetings held 4/30, 5/1, and 5/2 showing what the participants valued most about the Wabash River Corridor. Also the meetings covered resources of the WRHC, links or connections of the WRHC, and the boundaries of the WRHC. The next round of meetings is August 20-22. The first will be held at Fox Island in Fort Wayne, the second will be at Riverside Park in Logansport, and the final one will be George Rogers Clark National Historic Park in Vincennes. Janet Fawley spoke about the next round of meetings, which will be conducted differently. Break out groups will be incorporated.

Commission committees

Steve Morris researched the past commission committees. Steve handed out a printout of the committees and their stated objectives. They were Community Involvement Committee, Environmental Improvement Community, Historic Interpretation Committee, Public Education Committee, and Recreational Development Committee. There was a standardized Committee Report Form used in the past. It was suggested the commission not reestablish these committees, but rather appoint committees as needed and possibly use this historical information for guidance.

Equipment/supplies purchase

Steve Morris reported that the petty cash account was turned down. Steve questioned if the commission wished to push the issue. Commission discussed having Lucky Neiburger intervene and see if he could get approval for a petty cash account.

Commission travel expenses

Steve Morris passed out copies of the March 1999 minutes in which the commission passed a motion to allow the president and secretary to approve expenses up to \$2000. At the next meeting the commission will discuss this further.

Corridor brochure

Janet Fawley checked on prices for having the Corridor brochure reprinted. The results are: 100,000 brochures for \$16,477, 125,000 brochures for \$20,000. It was suggested that maybe the cost could be divided between the counties. Discussion ensued as to trying to incorporate this into each counties budget. It was brought up that some county budgets have already been set. Keith Ruble and Susan Benner are going to send a letter of request for each county to place this in their budget. Louise Jewell suggested pursuing other sources of funds such as DNR Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

SPEAKER

Marion Jackson, professor from Indiana State University spoke about the history of vegetation and the environment along the Wabash River. The Natural Heritage of Indiana is a book that has been written by Mr. Jackson. Keith Ruble suggested that everyone should have a copy.

NEW BUSINESS

Suggestions for future speakers

Janet Fawley will check with Arrowhead RC & D about raft trip experiences.

Letters sent/Letters received

From Purdue University we received the brochure Upper Wabash Ecosystem Project.

Received a letter about availability of newly revised Wabash River Guide Book by Jerry Hay.

A letter was received from Woolpert about Rangeline Road Bridge in Huntington County. The letter was given to Huntington County Commissioner Mike Mettler.

Other items

Steve Morris passed out a printout of the proposed budget for the 2002-2003 fiscal year. July 1st was the start of the 2002-2003 fiscal year. Steve and Susan put together the budget and had it reviewed by Lucky Neiburger for approval.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Janet Fawley announced that at the September meeting, which is being held at Riverside Park, there will be a walk before the meeting to view the Little Turtleway Plaza and trail. After the walk we plan to eat lunch at Emilio's, a restaurant in Logansport.

NEXT MEETING: September 11th, 1:00 p.m., Riverside Park at Logansport, Cass County.